

## News Release

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Public Affairs Office  
Sacramento District

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### Flood control wall being installed at Hwy 160 Bridge

As part of its work to reduce Sacramento's flood risk along the lower American River, the Army Corps of Engineers is closing the gaps in the American River slurry cutoff walls at bridges and around underground utilities using a method called jet grouting.

Work is now under way at the Highway 160 Bridge over the river. Each night for the next week, crews will close two of the three eastbound lanes from 7 p.m. until 6 a.m. Work will begin on the westbound lanes in three to four weeks.

"A procedure called jet grouting allows us to strengthen levees under roads without the need to dig a trench across the road and completely stop traffic," said John Sisley, the Corps of Engineers project engineer for the flood control work. "This method, while more expensive than the trench-type slurry wall we've used in other areas, allows us to close gaps in the slurry wall at the remaining extremely challenging areas," he added.

The Corps had planned to use the jet grout method at 27 sites along the river where bridges and buried utility lines prevented it from using large trenching equipment to work on the levee.

"As we analyzed what we learned over the last few years installing the slurry trenches, we found that we could use the trench method at some of the sites scheduled for jet grouting," said Colonel Michael Conrad, Jr. the Corps' Sacramento District Commander.

"So far, we saved \$800,000 at the Howe Avenue Bridge, \$800,000 at the Watt Avenue Bridge, and \$600,000 at the H Street Bridge," he added. "We're looking at other sites to see if we can further reduce the amount of jet grouting required."

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Flood control wall being installed at Hwy 160 Bridge  
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“Originally, we had planned to strengthen the levees by placing a 15- to 30-foot deep trench down the center of the levees and filling it with slurry, a mixture of cement, clay and soil that is impervious to water. But as we got into the work, we discovered deeply embedded cracks, unstable soil, and unmarked utilities. The floods of 1997 also showed us that the levees needed even more work, and that there were weak spots under bridges. It was soon obvious that we needed to modify our original plans,” Conrad said.

The Corps then revised its plans to reduce Sacramento’s flood threat. To reach impervious soil some of the slurry trenches had to go as deep as 80 feet, and that required specialized equipment.

The increased work will raise the estimated cost to just over \$200 million. In 1996, Congress authorized about \$56 million worth of levee work. Then in 1999, it added to the work and raised the cost to \$92 million.

The entire slurry cutoff wall project covers nearly 20 miles of the lower American River levees. The slurry walls run from just upstream of Watt Avenue to the Sacramento River on north bank and from the Mayhew Drain to the Sacramento River on the south bank. The Corps expects to complete the work in the fall of 2004.

The levee work is part of the efforts by the Corps, the State Reclamation Board, and the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency to increase Sacramento’s level of flood protection.

Note to editors: Please call Jim Taylor in the Corps of Engineers Public Affairs Office at 916-557-5101, pager 877-981-0319 to arrange a visit to the site. Someone from the Corps must escort all visitors. The site is difficult to get to and is a dangerous area.

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